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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 SANAA 000398

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [AADP](#) [CASC](#) [YM](#) [EAC](#)

SUBJECT: SANAA EAC MEETING -- 2 MARCH 2003

Classified By: Pol/Econ Deputy Chief Catherine J. Westley for Reasons 1
.5 (b and d)

1. (S/NF) Begin Summary: The Ambassador convened an Emergency Action Committee (EAC) meeting on March 2 to assess threat information and discuss contingency planning for a possible conflict with Iraq and other security-related matters. Key offices and personnel represented at the meeting included: AMB, DCM, POL/ECON, CONS, ADMIN, PD, RSO, ORCA, OMC, SOC YEMEN, RMO, FPD AND FBI. End summary.

Current Threat Assessment

2. (C) EAC discussed the current threat environment, concluding that nothing new had come up to change the threat assessment. EAC discussed the arrest of senior al-Qaeda leader Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in Pakistan, noting that it could hinder attacks in Yemen if he provides information and if al-Qaeda lies low following the arrest. The possibility of shooting attacks against motorists in light of recent attacks in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait was reiterated, with a reminder that Mission personnel should continue to exercise caution by varying times and routes, being unpredictable, and making maximum use of armored Embassy vehicles.

Warden Meeting Scheduled for March 3

3. (C) EAC discussed the timeliness of the Warden meeting scheduled for March 3 as part of the Embassy's regular communication with the American community. Other scheduled contingency consultations include: DCM meetings with the Local Guard Force to discuss perimeter security (especially after the recent Karachi attack); RSO contacts with all U.S. Fulbright students in country; DCM meeting with spouses of U.S. employees; RSO meeting with Amideast deputy director; and RSO follow-up at the Yemeni-American Language Institute. EAC members have heard increased questions from the larger expatriate community about what they should do in light of a possible war in Iraq and the drawdowns of British, Dutch and German Embassy staff.

Securing International Schools

4, (C) RSO briefed the EAC on efforts to secure international schools, including the Ambassador's 2/26 meeting with the Ministry of Interior. On the basis of Ambassador's proposal to the Minister of a security partnership -- in which the schools will take certain unilateral security steps and the ROYG will provide a static security presence at school sites during school hours plus mobile response teams around the clock -- follow-up is underway. A group of representatives from the international schools and several embassies (including Embassy Sanaa RSO) met with Interior officials 2/27 to discuss what the schools must do and what the ROYG could provide in terms of extra protection. The group is developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the ROYG that it hopes will help facilitate security assistance, including police escorts, concrete barriers and improved communications. Embassy Sanaa is a leading participant in this effort.

Other Mission Drawdowns

5. (C) EAC discussed drawdowns of other Embassies (notably Dutch, British and German) and international organizations in Yemen, including the UN. RSO reported that the UN in Sanaa is preparing a report for New York to recommend that facilitation of the departure of more than 130 family members if necessary. Several other small missions, including French, Japanese and Italian, are standing fast. DCM reported that at the USG authorized departure posts in the region approximately 50% of dependents have left post.

Vaccinations and Disaster Response

16. (SBU) EAC discussed the 2/23-25 smallpox immunization program, noting that only one person had fallen ill after the shot and that it could not be definitively traced to the vaccine. The person is now healthy. The RMO also discussed the future anthrax vaccinations and the possibility that the vaccines thought to be spoiled might be usable, pending the Department's analysis. RMO briefed the EAC on disaster response discussions with ROYG officials, including the Minister of Health. Yemeni authorities have the ability to analyze suspect powder and determine if it is/is not anthrax, but were generally pessimistic about their other CBW response abilities and requested assistance from the Embassy.

17. (SBU) RMO briefed EAC on the ongoing First Responder training, and noted upcoming training in bio-chemical response to include CBW escape mask training on March 10 with a visiting expert team.

Contingency Preparation: "StandFast" and "MoveSafe"

18. (C) DCM briefed the EAC on the guidelines for Embassy response to a possible Iraq contingency that would require a temporary closure and reduced or modified Embassy staffing.

19. (C) A declaration of StandFast would entail immediate closure of the Embassy and curtailment of all but essential operations. American staff performing essential functions would reside in the Embassy or the Alternate Command Center, while all other staff will remain in their residences. DCM circulated a classified staff list designating each employee's StandFast location. The Embassy would be closed to the public, with no vehicle traffic in or out except for essential operational travel (e.g., to/from ROYG ministries authorized by the Chief of Mission). FSN staff performing essential functions would be admitted to the Embassy on the basis of an Access List updated daily by the RSO.

110. (U) A declaration of MoveSafe would entail a less restrictive limitation on the movement of American personnel outside their residences or the Embassy compound. Embassy operations may be shut down or curtailed to a limited degree if designated by the COM. Travel would be allowed only in armored vehicles. Non-essential American and FSN staff would be allowed access to the Embassy in accordance with the level of Embassy operations and the COM's assessment of security conditions.

111. (C) DCM briefed the EAC on plans for daily situation reporting should hostilities occur between Iraq and coalition forces. He asked that each section provide information to the Political/Economic section early for inclusion in a daily sitrep to be sent out via classified e-mail or cable by mid-afternoon.

Security Drills and Radio Checks

112. (U) RSO held an intruder drill on February 27 that showed some deficiencies in staff knowledge on how to respond. More intruder drills will be held in the immediate future. RSO also conducted ongoing destruction drills with various sections. All sections were reminded to minimize their burn time.

113. (U) EAC noted the success of weekend radio notification by RSO and Post One of several peaceful demonstrations in Sanaa (2/28, 3/1, 3/2), which instructed personnel on the location of demonstrations and to avoid non-essential travel. EAC also announced an intensified schedule of radio checks in the coming days. EAC emphasized the importance of everyone carrying their radios at all times.

Demonstrations, Security Violations, EAP, Aggressive Driving

114. (C) EAC emphasized that everyone should report information gained on possible demonstrations or incidents related to demonstrations to the RSO. DCM reminded staff to remain vigilant regarding security violations, especially during this busy time. EAC members were reminded to read and comment on post's updated Emergency Action Plan. RSO asked EAC members to caution their staff to be more mindful of their driving habits, including avoiding unnecessary aggressive driving that could draw adverse attention from ROYG police and/or pedestrians.

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